

PSF

Great Britain: Office of Strategic Services



OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

August 13, 1942.

AMERICAN EMBASSY
LONDON

Dear Mr. President,

When I last had the pleasure of seeing you just before leaving for London, you asked me to write to you now and then, which of course I am delighted to do. On the other hand I don't want you to think of acknowledging such letters, otherwise I should feel that it was wrong for me to write to you.

I have been here now just under a month, and am gradually learning something about the new job. It takes me into circles where I have never before penetrated, far away from diplomacy and into the realm of war operations. It is intensely interesting and stimulating, and will become more so as our own military operations get under way. My first task was to get in touch with our own Command. General Eisenhower has been exceedingly cordial, and seems to welcome the closest possible association with us. My second task has been to get into friendly touch with the opposite numbers of OSS in the British Government. This is taking some time, and many lunch and dinner meetings, following English methods, appear to be necessary. My third task, which has not yet been fully completed, is to bring the office into intimate

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*Bravery 1-42
Behind Great
Britain*

contact with the intelligence officers of the exiled Governments, and to help in this direction, I am establishing personal connections with the heads of those Governments, the Presidents of Poland, Czechoslovakia, etc., etc. Everywhere the welcome has been cordial, and I am beginning to see how our office can be of great service to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington.

There is a problem which might affect the relationship between the London offices of OSS and OWI, which some people refer to as Psychological Warfare. I have insisted that there shall be no sign of friction between these two London offices, in view of the importance of preserving a solid front before the British Government Agencies. Personally I intend to see that OSS and OWI cooperate, keeping within our respective domains, and at the same time keeping one another fully informed. OSS in London is set up in such a way as to be in the closest touch with the military situation, while the office here of OWI will have the principal relationship with political propaganda activities. We can thus divide our daily work along these lines, and if OSS canalizes all military information, including that part of propaganda which the Joint Chiefs of Staff regard as concerned primarily with military operations, and OWI deals with all other aspects of propaganda, we will form an excellent team.

Our permanent office building is on Grosvenor Street,

a couple of blocks from the Embassy. It is not yet ready for us, and meanwhile we are huddled into temporary offices in the Embassy building. Winant has been most cordial, and has permitted me to keep a small office adjoining that of his Counsellor, so that in this way I can keep in touch with him, even after OSS has moved to its permanent building where I shall have my headquarters.

I need not describe London to you. St. Paul's Cathedral stands unscathed on the exterior amid surrounding ruin, certainly one of the greatest spectacles in London. But I find that conditions in Mayfair are even more depressing for I had not realized how much damage had been done to this part of the city. It has been literally vacated, and those houses even slightly damaged are being left to fall into ruin. We live in grim surroundings, except for the new apartment houses which are overcrowded. I am living at the Connaught Hotel which, though not a particularly cheerful establishment, is comfortable enough, and I shall probably remain there.

I lunched the other day with our mutual friend Arthur Murray, down for a day from Scotland, and very full of English politics. He tells me that he writes to you quite regularly, so that I need not describe to you his feelings about the P.M. which, to put it mildly, are not complimentary.

It is a great privilege to be here at this critical time, and I am thankful that I came.

With all good wishes,

Ever sincerely yours,

William Phillips

The Honorable Franklin Delano Roosevelt,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

~~SECRET~~

October 28, 1942 *file*

The President,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing a memorandum I have just received in the pouch from Bill Phillips recounting a conversation he had with Dr. Benes. I thought you would like to see it.

Sincerely,

William J. Donovan
William J. Donovan
Director

C
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P
Y

October 6, 1942

At Dr. Benes' invitation I lunched alone with him today at the Ritz, in a private room. He gave me the following information.

He has just learned from what he believes to be a responsible source, and which was again confirmed to him this morning, that General Halder, the German Chief of Staff, has been dismissed. He has been succeeded by Major General Tretzler, who has been advanced rapidly to this high office, contrary to the general practice in promotions in the German Army. Dr. Benes regards this change as of extreme importance for the following reasons:

On August 9th there was held an important defense council, attended by Hitler, to deal with the military problems that would arise after the capture of Stalingrad, which it was assumed would take place in a week, that is by August 16th. A quarrel ensued between Hitler and the older Generals, including General Halder. The latter group wished to continue the offensive operation to the north, in order to get behind Moscow, destroy Timoshenko's army, and finish the war before the winter set in. Hitler was against this proposal. He wanted to stabilize the Eastern front after taking the Caucasus, and then to free one hundred divisions for the West, and for concentration against Great Britain. This quarrel between the

Generals and Hitler was of course useless, because Stalingrad has not in fact fallen. Nevertheless, the dismissal of Halder is probably related to the quarrel, and his dismissal and that of von Bock is punishment for the failures in connection with Stalingrad. The dismissal of General Halder is confirmation of the fact that Hitler has destroyed any possible revolt among the Generals.

Preparations are now going on everywhere for a defensive war in the East and in the West. The Germans have made their last big scale offensive; they are not capable of another on this scale. The military machine, however, remains powerful and terrible, and there is no question but that the subject nations will continue to be starved into submission. The Germans will and can resist until the last moment, remaining on the defensive, realizing that they cannot win, but hoping that their opponents will become exhausted meanwhile.

The dissolution of Germany from within is further advanced than the English think, and Hitler and all the high Nazis are possessed with the fear that Germany will be defeated from within, exactly as it was in the last war. They fear they will be "stabbed in the back." Because of this fear, Hitler now has more than 600,000 S.S. men behind the front. Previously he had a large proportion of his S.S. troops with him at the front, but now, according to the latest information, the last of the S.S. has been

taken away from the front, and sent back into the interior of Germany for police purposes.

It is most important to realize that the S.S. now have their own bomber services from the Luftwaffe, which means also that the Luftwaffe has now become in a sense linked with the S.S. This means that everything that is done from now on by the Luftwaffe is governed by fear of internal disorder. In the beginning the S.S. was only a bodyguard for Hitler, now it is a great army, organized for internal purposes.

In Dr. Benes' opinion, if there is a second offensive, and it is sufficiently powerful, Germany will be finished a year from now, but this cannot happen until after there has been a defeat on land. A military defeat is a necessary preliminary for the collapse.

With regard to transport difficulties within Germany, Dr. Benes said that on August 31 last, there were 594,000 railway cars including those taken from the subject countries; there were 632,000 railway cars when the war began. With regard to locomotives, last month there were 6,000 less than required.

With regard to Africa, and the attitude of the Italians, they feel certain of an allied offensive in North Africa. Mussolini fears any such offensive and has asked Hitler for help from Germany. In response, movements of German engineers and materiel are crossing

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the Brenner and defensive operations in Sicily are now being carried out.

With regard to Spain, Franco has taken two important decisions: 1) he has reached the conclusion that Germany will not win over Russia, and that Germany will therefore not win the war, and 2) that Spain must taken into consideration the disappearance of the German Fascist Government. This, in Dr. Benes' opinion, is important inasmuch as Franco is a Fascist himself and because the information comes for a guaranteed source.

With regard to Russia, Dr. Benes merely repeated the point of view of Russian officials, to the effect that there will be no further action against Moscow this year, and that while another month of this effort may be expected in the region of the Caucasus, there will be no Russian disaster this autumn on either side of the Caucasian mountains.



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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN EMBASSY
LONDON

November 4, 1942.

Dear Mr. President,

I have just cabled to Secretary Hull my acceptance of the Indian assignment, and I must also express to you my deep appreciation of the confidence which you have placed in me. To go as your personal representative is a high honor, and also a great responsibility, for I am fully aware of the difficulties involved in the situation. I go with a genuine desire to help, and with keen enthusiasm. And now I am eagerly awaiting further instructions as to the scope of your intentions, and when and how you wish me to proceed.

Now that Eleanor's visit to England is nearing an end, I am sure you realize that it has been a triumphant success. Undoubtedly she has made a deep and lasting impression everywhere. Even "C", the invisible Brigadier, tells me that people have enthused to him about her speeches, which have been delivered with such simplicity and sincerity. And Lady Reading tells of the thousands of women, some of whom had to leave their homes at 4 a.m. and travel by train and bus to greet her, (Eleanor) at Canterbury, and felt immensely well repaid in doing so.

While she was a guest at Buckingham Palace, I walked down on several occasions to have a look at the crowds standing patiently around the gates for a glimpse of her, and I assure you it was touching to see among them so many of our own boys in uniform, to whom her presence here means so much.

You will hear all this many times from many people, but I wanted to be among the first to tell you, as an old friend, what a really splendid job she has done, and how grateful we all are to her for coming.

The election returns are coming over slowly, but so far everything seems entirely satisfactory, and your continued control of Congress assured. That is something to be thankful for in these conditions and times.

Sincerely yours,

William Phillips

The Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*file
journal.*

December 30, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

To read and return for my
files.

F. D. R.

Enclosure

*Thanks -
CH*

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 30, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

To read and return for my
files.

F. D. R.

Enclosure

Letter from Hon. William Phillips, Office of
Strategic Services, American Embassy, London,
12/17/42, to the President, in re his new mission
to India.



OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN EMBASSY
LONDON

December 17, 1942

Dear Mr. President,

As soon as I receive my final instructions, I shall be off on the great adventure, and I must confess that I am becoming a bit impatient because of the delays in receiving them. Perhaps the time lost has been gained in some respects. I have had good talks with various members of the Government, notably the Prime Minister, Amery, Sir John Anderson and Cripps, as well as with other Indian experts and a number of important Indians now in London. From this angle, of course, the general opinion can be summed up as follows: a complete readiness to give effect to the principle of self-determination in India, a duty however which cannot be fulfilled merely by walking out and leaving the India that the British have created, including the millions of the minority groups, to muddle through to a solution. Certainly most of the British with whom I have discussed these matters have a feeling of responsibility to prevent what they believe would be the bitterest kind of civil war between the Hindu and Moslem populations, if all restraint from above disappears.

Yesterday I had an amusing and interesting luncheon

with the Prime Minister at 10, Downing Street. The only other persons besides Mrs. Churchill were Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, the British Ambassador in Moscow, and Casey of Australia, now Minister of State in Cairo. We sat down at 1:30 and did not leave the table until a quarter to four, while Churchill touched upon the military, economic and social conditions in every corner of the earth. He was in grand form, as usual dressed in zipper suit and boots. He spoke of you as "the greatest spirit in the world of today". He was bitter about Willkie, and took the position that Willkie was fundamentally hostile to Britain, and therefore a danger in the present circumstances. Both Clark Kerr and Casey, who apparently knew Willkie well, tried to modify Churchill's views in this respect, but failed utterly.

There was one matter upon which he touched which I think worth while reporting to you. He said that he was your loyal follower in the North African campaign. He was, however, disturbed by the fact that there were no joint plans under way for future operations. He regretted this very much, and said, as an aside, that he was ready to make a winter's transatlantic crossing by plane if only some agreement could be reached with you for this purpose.

While he was very cordial in his references to my Mission to Delhi, I gathered from other sources, and among them members of his Cabinet, that he is less liberal-minded in his attitude towards India than the general

feeling here in official and unofficial circles. Churchill made use of his familiar phrase, that he was not prepared to sacrifice any part of the British Empire, but then again later on in the conversation he touched upon the necessity of giving India Dominion status, provided only that the Indian political parties were in agreement. Amery is far more definite in his feelings that that is the only answer to the problem, and he encouraged me to do everything I can to persuade the leaders of the necessity of getting together for informal discussions.

I hope, Mr. President, that I can be of some little help, although I have no delusions with regard to the difficulties and complications, and the ease with which one can make a false step and destroy ones usefulness. I shall manoeuver carefully and will not attempt anything at first except ~~to gain~~ the confidence and friendship of the Indians themselves. Out of that relationship, if I can accomplish that much, a door may be opened which will show me the way in which to move wisely and helpfully.

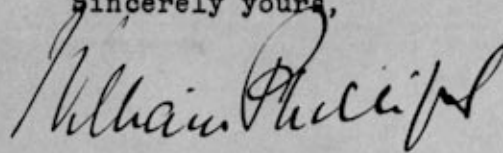
Again let me assure you how deeply I appreciate the high honor of representing you in a personal capacity. I will do the best I can to carry out my instructions, but I hope that neither you nor the Secretary will expect too much in the way of definite results. The divisions throughout India between the political and religious groups are so deep-seated and of such historical significance that the problem of a free and independent India, able to stand on its own

feet, is certainly a terrific one.

You may have heard of the death of Arthur Murray's wife yesterday. His sister called me this morning on the phone to tell me that she died in a nursing home in Ascot of toxin poisoning. The body is to be cremated and taken for burial tomorrow to Scotland.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Phillips". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Sincerely yours,".

The President,

The White House.

Office of Strategic Services
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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 31, 1942

The President

The White House

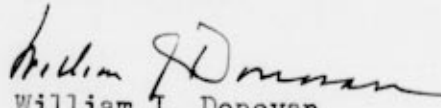
My dear Mr. President:

You will recall that in June we sent two men, Captain Ilia Tolstoy and Lieutenant Brooke Dolan on a mission to Tibet. They carried with them a personal letter from you to the Dalai Lama, together with a specially designed watch as a gift. These men recently arrived in Tibet, and today I received from them the following message:

"The following message is for President Roosevelt from Dalai Lama, as given by the Kashag Cabinet Ministers of the Government of Tibet:

'On December twelfth, your emissaries to his holiness the Dalai Lama, Captain Tolstoy and Lieutenant Brooke Dolan, arrived in Lhasa. At an official reception of December twentieth, your letter and photograph were presented to the Dalai Lama and the regent. It is desired by their holinesses that we convey to you their warmest appreciation of your good will.'"

Respectfully,


William J. Donovan
Director